

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 113316
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P 172358Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 113316

FOR MATLOCK FROM GARRISON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL - INFORMAL

1. THE STATUS OF THE POLITICAL SECTION SHIFT IS THAT WE UNDERSTAND PERSONNEL WILL PROPOSE JUDY MANDEL TO FILL IN BEHIND SMITH IN THE CONSULAR SECTION, LEAVING YOU TO FILL BOTH POL VACANCIES FROM WITHIN. SHE WANTS TO DO IT AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO SCRAPE BY WITH HER RUSSIAN. AS FOR A REPLACEMENT FOR PRESEL THE REAL PROBLEM WOULD BE TO FILL IN BEHIND AN INTERNAL EMBASSY TRANSFER WITH SOMEONE FROM HERE WHO ALREADY HAS RUSSIAN. WE HAVE SCRAPED THE BARREL OF RUSSIAN SPEAKERS PRETTY THIN. FOT ANYONE WHO WOULD EXTEND FOR A CRACK AT THE JOB?

2. WE WERE TAKEN OFF GUARD BY WIRELESS FILE ITEM TOO, BUT WE UNDERSTAND IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT FIRST MEETING OF JOINT WORKING GROUP ON INDIAN OCEAN, WHICH ESTABLISHED CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 113316

DURING SECRETARY'S MARCH VISIT, WILL BE IN MOSCOW IN JUNE. DATES NOT YET FIRM, BUT JUNE 15-17 HAS BEEN MENTIONED. GELB WILL LEAD US DELEGATION AND EMBOFF WILL BE MEMBER. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION OF AGENDA AND PROCEDURES FOR THESE TALKS, WHICH WILL BE EXPLORATORY, HAS DELAYED FORMAL ARRANGEMENTS, BUT WE HOPE YOU WILL BE GETTING TELEGRAM

EARLY NEXT WEEK ASKING YOU TO DISCUSS AGENDA AND OTHER
ARRANGEMENTS WITH APPROPRIATE SOVIET AUTHORITIES.

3. WE HAVE FOUND ONE SOURCE HERE IN WASHINGTON FOR
WALLACE'S STORY ON DISSIDENTS - NOT IN SOV I CAN ASSURE
YOU. HOWEVER, HE CLAIMS HE DIDN'T GO BEYOND SAYING THAT
MEETINGS IN DISSIDENT APARTMENTS WERE OUT. WE HAVE HAD
SOME WORDS WITH THE OFFICE IN QUESTION ABOUT HOW TO
RESPOND TO YOUR CABLE. WE WOULD LIKE TO TELL THE
AMBASSADOR WHERE THINGS STAND BEFORE DECIDING FINALLY
WHETHER TO PUSH FOR A FORMAL RESPONSE. YOU SHOULD BE
AWARE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN A FAIR NUMBER OF RUMORS
SPREAD BACK HERE, AND THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTIONS
THAT THE REACTION TO HAVING FINGERS SLAPPED FORMALLY
COULD BE FURTHER HINTS TO THE PRESS. WE ARE ON YOUR
SIDE ENTIRELY, AND HAVE A CABLE READY SAYING SO, WHICH
WE WILL SHOW THE AMBASSADOR BEFORE SENDING OUT TO YOU.
CHRISTOPHER

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